

Doing the global-action wave

By [Debra Bendis](#)

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When *Century*

editor-at-large Bill McKibben visited the White House last month, he left [disappointed](#). After driving from Maine with one of the solar panels installed on the White House by Jimmy Carter and removed by Ronald Reagan (who also let subsidies for renewable energy slide), McKibben pitched several staff members on re-installing the panels as a symbol of an administration that will press harder for environmental change. But staffers seemed more interested in touting existing environmental initiatives. (Some [suggested](#) that the White House wanted to maintain a distance from possible affiliation with the one-term Carter administration.)

McKibben's colleague Jamie Henn wrote a [post](#) to buoy up disappointed members of their organization, 350.org. The group is dedicated to pressing for reduction of heat-trapping carbon dioxide in the

atmosphere to 350 parts per million, [the most it can absorb](#) without catastrophic change. We're at 392 parts and climbing.

A month later the White House [announced](#) that it would be putting up solar panels after all. And just in time. On the heels of the announcement came perhaps the largest global grassroots event ever—350.org's global climate change party, [Day of Action](#). The results are still coming in, but the hope is that there is some power in 7,347 actions—bike rides, tree plantings, solar installations—performed in 188 countries, with reports and photos collected and broadcast from one website.

[Take a moment to see](#) the pride and hopefulness in many faces, including children.

Read Bill McKibben's Century [article](#) on the gulf oil leak.